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# HISTORICAL OUTLINE

OF THE

**American Colonization Society,**

AND REMARKS

ON THE

ADVANTAGES AND PRACTICABILITY

OF

COLONIZING IN AFRICA

THE

FREE PEOPLE OF COLOR FROM THE UNITED STATES.

*Sparks, J. A. D.*  
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FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW FOR JANUARY, 1824.

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## COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

*The Sixth Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States ; with an Appendix. Washington City, 1823.*

IF we should be thought to come forward at a late hour, in noticing the labors of a Society, formed in this country more than seven years ago, for the purpose of adopting some efficient plan of colonizing the free people of color, we trust our negligence will be attributed to any other cause, than a want of deep interest in the objects of the Society, or indifference to the zeal with which these objects have been pursued. The broad foundation on which the schemes of this Society are built, as well as the character of its patrons, raises it to an importance, not to be claimed by any other private association in this country. Its aims have a pointed bearing on our political concerns, and, if successful, cannot fail to operate most favorably on our civil institutions, and our domestic peace and happiness.

Coming to us in this shape, and patronized as it is by some of our most enlightened statesmen and disinterested philanthropists, the Colonization Society demands of those, who would judge with fairness, to examine dispassionately, not its history and details only, but its purposes and principles, not the failures which it may have suffered from accidents or inexperience, but the motives by which it is actuated,

and the objects which it would attain. Such an examination we are disposed to give it. What has this Society done? What advantages can be expected from its success? Are its designs practicable? By what means can they be best promoted? To these general topics our inquiry shall be directed.

The plan of colonizing the free people of color, in some place remote from the United States, originated in the legislature of Virginia nearly twenty years ago. A correspondence on the subject was entered into between Mr Munroe, then governor of Virginia, and Mr Jefferson, President of the United States. The purpose of this correspondence is explained in a letter from Mr Jefferson, written ten years afterwards, and published among other documents appended to the First Annual Report of the Colonization Society. It appears, that the governor of Virginia, at the request of the legislature, consulted the national executive on the best means of procuring an asylum for the free blacks of that State, and of establishing a colony where they might assume a rank and enjoy privileges from which the laws and structure of society must forever prohibit them, in their present situation. Mr Jefferson proposed to gain them admittance into the establishment at Sierra Leone, which then belonged to a private company in England, or, in case this should fail, to procure a situation in some of the Portuguese settlements in South America. He wrote to Mr King, then our minister in London, to apply to the Sierra Leone Company. This application was made, but without success, on the ground that the Company was about to dissolve, and give up its possessions to the government. An attempt to negotiate with the Portuguese government proved equally abortive, and no further active measures were taken.

The legislature of Virginia, however, ceased not to hold fast its original purpose. The subject was from time to time discussed, till, in the year 1816, a formal resolution was passed, authorizing the executive of the state to correspond with the President of the United States, soliciting his aid in procuring a situation for colonizing the free blacks, and such as might afterwards be emancipated. The senators and representatives in Congress from Virginia, were requested to



lend their exertions in advancing this object. Mr Mercer, in his address at the first annual meeting of the Colonization Society, observed, that 'this resolution passed the popular branch of the legislature of Virginia with but nine dissenting voices out of one hundred and forty six; and a full quorum of the senate, with but one. It was, in fact, but a repetition of certain resolutions, which had been unanimously adopted by the same legislature, though in secret sessions, at three antecedent periods in the last seventeen years. It was truly the feeling and the voice of Virginia.' The legislatures of Maryland, Tennessee, and Georgia, followed the example of Virginia, and adopted a resolution of the same import. The doings of these four states were mentioned with approbation in the report of a committee of Congress, although the great object at which they pointed, the plan of colonization under the patronage of the government, seems never to have engaged the deliberations of the national councils.

The first person, as far as we can learn, who conceived the notion of forming a society for colonizing the free blacks, was the Rev. Dr Finley of New Jersey. This gentleman had long felt a warm interest in the condition of this class of our population, and had consulted his friends on the best mode of providing for them a country and a home beyond the limits of the United States. He finally settled it in his mind, that Africa was the most suitable place for such a colony. In December, 1816, he went to Washington, where he began in earnest to put his plan in execution, wrote a pamphlet to recommend it to the public, applied in person to several members of Congress, and citizens of Washington, and at length succeeded in causing a few persons to listen to his representations and embrace his views. On the 21st of the same month, several gentlemen convened to consider the subject, when the meeting was opened by an address from Mr Clay, explaining its object, and setting forth the advantages, which might be expected to result from a colonization society. He was followed by Mr Randolph and other gentlemen, who accorded with him in sentiment. A committee was appointed to prepare a constitution, which was adopted the week following, and Judge Washington, of the Supreme Court, was chosen president of the Society.

On Dr Finley's return to New Jersey, the legislature was in session at Trenton, and by his exertions, an auxiliary society was formed, which received the cordial support of several members of the legislature. About this time he was chosen president of Franklin College, at Athens, Georgia, to which place he soon after repaired. For some months his health had been on the decline, and he died, we believe, in Georgia, before the close of the next year.\*

Immediately after the organization of the Society, it was determined to send out two agents to explore the western coast of Africa, and seek for the best position to commence a colony. Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess were appointed to this enterprise, and they sailed for England in the latter part of November 1817. It was deemed advisable to visit England on their way, for the purpose of gaining a favorable reception at the colony of Sierra Leone, of establishing a friendly intercourse with the African Institution at London, and of obtaining such knowledge as would be essentially important in preparing them for their inquiries on the coast of Africa. By Judge Washington they were provided with a letter to the Duke of Gloucester, the president and zealous patron of the African Institution, who received them with kindness, proffered assistance, and expressed an interest in the benevolent undertakings of the American Colonization Society. Mr Wilberforce, whose name is so intimately blended with all the schemes of humanity, which the last thirty years have witnessed in favor of the degraded Africans, was assiduous in his attention to the agents, and active in forwarding their designs. He introduced them to Lord Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, who gave them a letter of introduction and recommendation to the governor of Sierra Leone. In their letters from England, the agents also acknowledged themselves under obligations to Lord Gambier, Lord Teignmouth, and many other gentlemen of eminence and worth, who approved their design, and from

\* Dr Finley was educated at Princeton College, under the celebrated Dr Witherspoon. He was respected as a scholar, and esteemed as a faithful pastor, and amiable and benevolent man. His pamphlet above mentioned speaks well for his understanding and his education. See *Memoirs of Dr Finley*, page 82.

whom they received marks of kindness. While in London they were moreover furnished by Count Schimmelman, late minister of state in the kingdom of Denmark, with a letter from the Colonial Department of the Danish government, recommending them to the protection and assistance of the governors of the Danish Colonies in Africa.

Under auspices thus favorable, they sailed from the Downs on the 2d of February 1818. They first landed at St Mary's, a village on the banks of the Gambia, and near its mouth. Ten days afterwards they arrived at Sierra Leone. Governor Macarthy was absent on a visit to the Gambia, and Lord Bathurst's letter was delivered to the Chief Justice of the colony. Shortly after their arrival, the agents met the principal members of what is called the Friendly Society, or an association composed wholly of colored people, instituted at the suggestion of the celebrated Paul Cuffee, and consisting for the most part of colonists whom he had carried out from the United States. These persons were highly gratified with the statements of the agents, and two leading men, Kizell and Martin, who were well acquainted with the country, offered to accompany them as interpreters and guides down the coast, introduce them to the chiefs, and assist in negotiating for lands in the island of Sherbro, or any other place which should be thought preferable. A sloop of fifteen tons was engaged, men sufficient to work it, all Africans, were employed, and provisions laid in for an absence of four weeks.

Thus equipped they sailed out of the harbor of Sierra Leone, and on the next day found themselves in sight of the Bananas. As the headman of these islands was understood to have some influence with the kings of the Sherbro, it was deemed good policy to pay their respects to him in passing; and to make these the more acceptable, they were accompanied by the valuable consideration of a few bars of tobacco and gunpowder. Caulker, for this was the headman's name, was pleased with their tokens of respect, and promised his interest in their behalf. They next arrived at the plantains, where the headman, who had lived six years in England, received them very civilly, but expressed apprehensions that the colonists, if they once had footing in the country, might find it convenient to extend their territory too rapidly.

and be troublesome to their neighbors. He cited the instance of Sierra Leone as a foundation for his fears, but on the whole was willing an experiment should be made.

Several other kings were visited on the way down to the Sherbro. The agents had the good fortune at Bendou to find not only Somano, the king of the place, but Safah, another king, whose dominions they would have been obliged to seek out. It was no sooner told to Somano, that two ambassadors from America desired an audience, than he summoned them to appear at the palaver house. When they approached, the king was seated in his place. 'Safah soon made his appearance, marching along between the mud walled cottages, dressed in a silver laced coat, a superb three cornered hat, a mantle around his neck hanging nearly to the ground, blue hafta trowsers, considerably the worse for the wear, and without stockings or shoes. Somano was dressed in a common gown and pantaloons, with hat and shoes.' After a formal introduction to the kings, and shaking hands with all the men and women collected around the palaver house, it was remembered that the presents were unluckily left on board the sloop, and the kings had no words to speak till these were produced. Kizell was despatched to bring them; but there was a greater difficulty yet to come. When the articles intended for the presents were spread before the kings, they discovered only one jar of rum. They refused to be moved by so small a temptation to open the palaver, insisting, that as there were two kings it was unworthy of their regal dignity to deliberate on affairs so important, without a bottle of rum for each. Kizell was again sent to the sloop, and all obstructions were removed by producing another bottle. The kings' ears were then unsealed, and they were ready to hear what their visitors had to propose. The notion of a colony did not strike them favorably; they had fears of encroachments; they referred to Sierra Leone, and spoke of a war growing out of that settlement, which deprived king Tom of his territory. No serious objections were raised, however, and the result was, that Somano and Safah would acquiesce in the decision of their superior, king Sherbro. It was only urged as indispensable, that should an arrangement be made, they should have, among other things, 'a silver headed cane, and especially a black horsetail, furnished



with an elegant handle.' This latter article is a badge of royalty, without which no prince can pretend to much rank, or hope for authority and respect.

We next find our party at Yonie, the residence of king Sherbro, chief man of the country. The king was absent, but Kong Couber, a man of consequence, gave an audience to Kizell and Martin, who were clothed with the office of *avant-courrières* to the agents. Kong Couber received them affably, and listened with attention, but ventured no decided opinion. He said a council of the headmen must be called, in which the king would preside, and the subject would receive the consideration it deserved. Accordingly the next day notice was given, that the king would hold a palaver, and hear the words of the strangers. They waited on him at the appointed time, and found him prepared for business, dressed in a calico gown, with a cap and three cornered hat on his head. The council convened under a *cola* tree; the presents were displayed on a mat in the centre of the circle; the usual ceremonies were gone through; king Sherbro was seated in his regal chair, with a silver headed cane in one hand, and a horsetail, the visible token of his kingly power, in the other. The agents explained their instructions, told him they wanted lands for people in a far country, whose ancestors were natives of Africa, and who would come and settle quietly in the dominions of king Sherbro.

The object of their visit being thus made known in detail, Kong Couber, who acted as his majesty's prime minister, replied, that their words were very good, but told them with disapprobation, that they had stopped at the Bananas, and consulted Caulker and other chiefs before they came to Yonie. After this, how could they say, that they were commissioned to treat directly with king Sherbro? This unexpected question was answered rather awkwardly by the agents, who could only apologize that they were unacquainted with the customs of the country, and but indifferently informed as to the gradation of rank among the kings. Kong Couber was not satisfied, but considered it a disrespect to Sherbro, that they should first go to the other kings, and especially was he displeased, that these kings did not send presents, or come themselves to consult the great king. It was concluded that nothing should be done, at least, till Somano and Safah were



present, and the council broke up with an order from the king to send a special messenger to require their attendance.

This point was not so easily effected. The remains of an old feud with Sherbro still lingered in the minds of these two chiefs, and they could not readily be prevailed on to engage in the palaver. After a week's delay, other messengers were sent; Somano and Safah arrived; the old differences between the parties were settled at a private council, and the day came when the kings declared themselves ready to hold the grand palaver.

'We went on shore,' says Mr Mills, 'and found all assembled under the cola tree. Sherbro was seated in his armed chair, with Somano on his right hand and Safah on his left, holding the insignia of his office, the silver headed cane and the horsetail. Kong Couber sat on a mat before Sherbro. Mr Burgess, Kizell, and myself, sat facing the kings. After shaking hands with the kings and princes, Mr Kizell said, "We are come." Kong Couber replied, "We see you; we are glad; we love you; we do not hate you; you are strangers among us; we love your country; we are friends; we love peace as you do; war is not good. But when you came from the headmen of your country to Sherbro, where is the letter you brought to Sherbro?" We answered, that we had instructions to visit Sherbro, and consult with the kings of the country; but as king Sherbro was not personally known in our country, no letter was addressed to him. He afterwards said, if we had come in our ship directly to Yonie, they could give us an answer, and asked Kizell, if his father, the governor of Sierra Leone, did not send him with us. Kizell said the governor did not, as he was absent at the Gambia; besides, the people of Sierra Leone were free to go where they pleased, without asking their father. I replied, that we came to Sierra Leone strangers to all the people, and finding our friends, Kizell, Martin, and Anderson, to be acquainted with the language and kings of the country, we invited them to come with us. Kizell said he had a letter from a friend in England to assist us; besides, if strangers to king Sherbro arrive at Sierra Leone, it was not fit to let them stand alone, but come and introduce them.

'Kong Couber said, "The country belongs to all the kings and people; we cannot sell land unless we see them all." We, in reply, urged the necessity of a definite answer, that we might carry their good words to our people, or go to other kings, who would give us a good answer. We inquired whether the headmen and people could not be assembled before we went away. Kong Couber answered, it was the busy season of the year, the rains were coming on, the people were clearing their plantations, and sowing

their rice; the kings were poor, and must work as well as the people; the people could not be called together unless there was something to set before them. If we had goods to buy lands, and people to sit down, they would call the headmen together. After much palaver, and a forcible recapitulation of the objects of our visit, we inquired, "What answer shall we carry to our people of color? Will king Sherbro receive his children?" "Yes, we cannot hate them, we will receive them."

Thus ended the council of the kings, and at the request of Kong Couber, the words of Sherbro were written in two books, one to be retained by him, and the other by the agents. The parting was amicable, and it was understood, that when the people arrived with goods to pay for land, the kings and headmen would supply them according to their wishes.

The agents visited other places among the islands, and on the opposite coast, especially the Bagroo river, which empties into a bay opposite to the island of Sherbro. The country on the banks of the Bagroo is fertile, and soon rises into high lands and mountains in the interior. Everywhere the people were friendly, and several of the chiefs offered land, and protection to settlers as far as their authority extended. After an absence of five weeks the agents returned to Sierra Leone, and in a few days sailed for England. Mr Burgess arrived in the United States on the 22d of October following; but his worthy companion, Mr Mills, whose energy and zeal had contributed much to the success of the mission, was not destined to return; he died on his passage from the coast of Africa.

The information collected by the agents was encouraging to the friends of colonization, and induced the managers of the Society to concentrate their exertions to the single purpose of establishing a settlement in the Sherbro, or at some post in the vicinity. They made preparations for sending out a vessel with such free persons of color, as might voluntarily embark, and appointed Mr Crozer as agent to superintend the affairs of the colonists, negotiate for lands, and form such temporary regulations, as might be necessary in the incipient stages of the colony. The expenses, which had been incurred by the managers, had more than absorbed the funds arising from subscriptions; but an appeal to the citizens of Baltimore, by some of the zealous friends of the

Society, was followed by liberal donations from several munificent, public spirited individuals of that city, and with this timely assistance the managers were enabled to prosecute the work they had begun, till the formation of auxiliary societies in different parts of the country, had brought a larger amount of means to their disposal.\*

In the progress of these events, the benevolence of the Society was also turned to another quarter. By an extraordinary oversight in the laws of Congress respecting the slave trade, thirty four natives of Africa, who had been recaptured, and carried into a port of Georgia, were left unprotected after their release, and advertised to be sold according to the laws of the state. Mr Meade, the Society's agent, immediately repaired to Georgia by the direction of the managers, and arrived in time to prevent the sale, and provide for the restoration of these unfortunate Africans to their native country. After discharging this office of humanity in May, 1819, Mr Meade travelled as agent in various parts of the United States, and was the means of establishing several auxiliary societies.†

\* The following is an extract from a letter written by Mr Mercer and Mr Key, to Elias B. Caldwell, Esq. Secretary of the Colonization Society, dated August 1st, 1818. 'In conformity with the wishes of the board of Managers, we proceeded as far as Baltimore, on our way to the north, intending, if necessary, to prolong our tour to Boston. The liberality of Baltimore, of which the annexed list of subscribers affords an interesting testimony, rendered it unnecessary, that we should proceed further, in order to obtain the funds immediately required by the mission to Africa.' *Second Annual Report, Appendix, p. 121.*

† The abolition act of 1807 threatens against offenders imprisonment and fines, as well as the condemnation of any vessel engaged in violating the law. The purchaser or seller of any person of color, who should be imported into the United States, is subject to a forfeiture of eight hundred dollars for every person thus sold or bought. The following remarkable proviso, however, is attached to this part of the act; 'that the aforesaid forfeiture shall not extend to any seller or purchaser of any negro, mulatto, or person of color, who may be sold or disposed of in virtue of any regulation, which may hereafter be made by any of the legislatures of the several states. in that respect, in pursuance of this act, and the constitution of the United States.' This clause refers to another preceding it in the act, by which it is declared, that no one shall hold any right or title to any person or persons of color brought into the United States in violation of the law, but that these persons 'shall remain subject to any regulations, not contravening the provisions of this act, which the legislatures of the several states or territories, at any time hereafter, may make for disposing of any such negro, mulatto, or person of color.'

On this part of the act the state of Georgia put a most extraordinary construction. In devising means to provide for persons of color, who might be illegally introduced into the state, the legislature passed a law, empowering

By a law of Congress passed March 3d, 1819, for the more effectual suppression of the slave trade, the President was authorized to send government agents to reside on the coast of Africa. Mr Samuel Bacon and Mr John P. Bankson were appointed. These gentlemen went out as passengers in the *Elizabeth*, a vessel chartered by the Colonization Society, which sailed from New York in the month of February, 1820, having on board Mr Crozer, and eighty eight colonists under his charge. The first intelligence from the agents, after they reached the coast of Africa, exhibited their prospects in a flattering light; but the bright hopes, and joyful anticipations thus excited, were soon to be clouded with disappointment, and damped with sorrow. By some unaccountable mismanagement, which, if it will suffer an explanation, will hardly admit an apology, the *Elizabeth* was allowed to sail at such a season, as to arrive on the coast at the very commencement of the rains. It required but a slender knowledge of African geography to ensure the conviction, that nothing could be more rash, than to subject a northern constitution to such a trial, and more especially on the low shores of the Sherbro, confined in bays where the only restorative influence, the refreshing sea breezes, could rarely come.

These things considered, we are not to be surprised, that the next vessel from Africa brought the melancholy news of the death of the three agents, and more than twenty of the colonists. They were carried off by the fever of the climate,

the Governor to '*cause the said negroes, mulattoes, or persons of color to be sold, after giving sixty days notice in a public gazette, in such manner as he may think best calculated for the interest of the state.*' Sales under this law have accordingly been made, and the proceeds rendered to the state treasury. Another case could not occur, perhaps, in which any state could pass a law in conformity with the letter of a law of Congress, and at the same time do such violence to its spirit. It is a law to encourage, rather than abolish slavery; and if it do not impeach the humanity of the statesmen of Georgia, it argues little for their invention, that they could not contrive a better mode of disposing of the unfortunate human beings, whom the crimes of their fellow creatures had torn from their homes, and thrown unprotected into the arms of strangers.

It is but fair to add, however, that the same act, which authorized these sales, gave permission to the Colonization Society to receive such recaptured Africans, as might be subject to the above law, and return them to their own country, *after paying all the expenses* which the state had incurred on their account. It was under the encouragement held out by this redeeming clause in the act, that the Society sent Mr Meade on a mission to Georgia. See *Third Annual Report*, p. 11.



heightened by exposure, fatigue, anxiety, and want of medical assistance. After Mr Crozer's death, who sickened almost all soon as he arrived, no physician remained. Thus deprived of their guides, the colonists became desponding and disorderly, refused to submit to any authority, and, to fill up the hours of idleness, betook themselves to stealing and quarrelling. Daniel Coker, a colored man, who had been for some years a preacher in Baltimore, was their nominal leader; but the spirit of insubordination had gone abroad, and was not to be quelled. Mr Bacon had bought a schooner, which contained the stores for the colony, and of which Coker contrived to keep possession. After leaving a portion of the stores and provisions with the emigrants, he departed with the schooner for Sierra Leone, where Captain Wadsworth, of the United States ship John Adams, found him on the 6th of October.

In addition to the fatality of circumstances, serious and unexpected difficulties arose from the character of the colonists. They were admitted with too little discrimination; vice and insubordination showed themselves on the voyage out; and a large portion of them considered emigration as only a release from labor, and a claim on the society for support. The experience of the managers has remedied evils from these sources, and they will not be likely again to occur.

When the agents arrived at Sherbro, they found things much altered since the visit of their predecessors. The smooth and meek Kizell, who was a prime leader in the Friendly Society, and professed so lively an interest in the former mission, who played the hypocrite so artfully by his devotions on the sabbath, and by his daily reprehensions of the slave trade, and the bad habits of his neighbors; this man proved in the end a treacherous, wily deceiver; with more knowledge and experience than the surrounding natives, he was not a whit behind them in his vices. By having the confidence of the agents and colonists at first, he was able to practise on them the greater imposition. As for king Sherbro, and his minister of state, Kong Couber, we hear no more of the 'book,' which was left with them at their request two years before. The book was lost, and its words forgotten. A contract was made for lands on the Bagroo by Mr Bacon; and part of the goods given in payment, but after his



death the contract was declared to be broken, and the goods were not returned. Nor do we learn that Somano and Safah came to demand the regal badge, which they coveted so much at the hands of Mr Burgess, or to redeem the pledge of friendship so cordially proffered. In short, after the agents' death, the conduct of the colonists was such, that they were neither respected, loved, nor feared by the natives, and no just ground of hope was left, that a peaceful establishment could be made either in the Sherbro, or Bagroo country. Captain Wadsworth advised Coker to return to the Sherbro, and sent to his assistance on board the schooner two midshipmen, and a boat's crew of ten men. All attempts at negotiation with the natives proving unsuccessful, and there being no authorized agent to take charge of the colonists, they went back in the schooner to Sierra Leone, and solicited the protection of the governor, till further instructions should be received from America. The governor acceded to their proposal, and granted them the asylum they desired.

At the beginning of the year 1821, the brig *Nautilus* sailed from Norfolk, having on board two government agents, Mr Winn and Mr Bacon, who were to be stationed on the coast of Africa. In the same vessel went out Mr Andrus and Mr Wiltberger, agents for the Colonization Society, and with them twenty eight new colonists. On the 9th of March they landed at Sierra Leone, where the emigrants were debarked, and a situation provided for them at Fourah Bay within the jurisdiction of Freetown. By the lease of a large estate suitable for cultivation, the colonists were amply furnished with employment and the means of comfort, till the agents could have time leisurely to explore the coast, and fix on the best spot for their ultimate establishment. Mr Andrus and Mr Bacon started on an expedition of inquiry; they coasted along the Bagroo and the country south; in some places the natives were hostile to their views, and in others, where they were more friendly, many requisites for settling a colony were wanting. They proceeded to the Grand Bassa, a region situated in the north west borders of what is called the Grain Coast of Guinea, in the vicinity of Cape Mesurado, and about three hundred miles from Sierra Leone. Here they found a country more fertile, elevated, and healthy, and in all respects better calculated for their purpose, than any they had seen, and the natives well disposed to receive them.

But as ill luck would have it, the agents entangled themselves in a difficulty about the slave trade. They undertook to impose their own conditions, and insisted that the chiefs, who offered them lands, should banish this traffic from their territories. It manifested no share of wisdom to say anything on this delicate subject, and least of all to demand at the outset a sacrifice of a trade, however barbarous, in which the natives had been educated, and in favor of which were enlisted their habits, interests, and prejudices. Unequal to the task of impossibility, which they attempted, the agents desisted from closing any contract, and returned to Sierra Leone, favorably impressed with the country, to wait for further instructions. Here Mr Andrus was shortly after cut off by the fever, as were Mr and Mrs Winn, who died in the months of July and August. Mr Bacon returned to the United States, and the colonists were left under the sole charge of Mr Wiltberger.

In their Fifth Annual Report the Managers express their gratification, that nearly at this juncture they were so fortunate as to engage the services of Dr Eli Ayres, the present agent of the Society. He repaired immediately to Sierra Leone, where he waited the arrival of Lieutenant Stockton in the United States Schooner Aligator. The first concern of these gentlemen was to find a place for commencing a colony, and from the reports of the agents concerning Bassa, their thoughts were turned to that country. The result of this expedition was the purchase of Cape Mesurado, where the colony was finally established. As the events connected with this purchase hold an important place in the history of the Colonization Society, we shall present them to our readers in the language of Dr Ayres.

‘When Lieutenant Stockton arrived at Sierra Leone,’ he observes, ‘I had an interview with him. He immediately sent his officers to examine the Augusta. They pronounced her not seaworthy, her masts, spars, and upper rigging being decayed. In consequence of the short allowance of his provisions, it became necessary for me to provide a method of returning to Sierra Leone, when we went down the coast. I applied to Mr M’Canley for masts and spars, but there was no timber to be had that would answer the purpose. I then tried to charter a vessel for the purpose; but one offered, which upon examination proved to be nearly

as bad as our own. Lieutenant Stockton consented, as no alternative appeared, to venture in our own vessel.

‘On the 6th of December, we sailed out of the harbor. Lieutenant Stockton was good enough to put on board the *Augusta* Lieutenant M’Kean and four men. I took seven of our men.

‘We had a very calm passage, and our old vessel sailed remarkably well. We anchored last night in Mesurado Bay. This morning, 12th of December, at day light, saw a number of Croomen rowing off to us; got under way, and at fifteen minutes past ten o’clock cast anchor close under Cape Mesurado. In a few minutes the boats were hoisted out, and the Lieutenant and myself were on shore.

‘We informed the people, who gathered round us, that we had come to see the king; that we wanted to get some land to build houses on; that we had heard very good accounts of king Peter, and preferred settling with him; that the people on the Bagroo wanted us to settle in their country, but we said, “No, we will go and see king Peter first; if he won’t let us have land, then we will settle somewhere else.” We pretended to be very indifferent whether we succeeded with them or not, as there were so many places on the coast which we could get. This, in the end proved much to our advantage.’

After this consultation they succeeded in gaining a sight of this formidable personage, king Peter. With him they had a short palaver, which ended in his thanking them for the preference they had given him, and a promise that he would meet them again, and grant their wishes. In the mean time, Dr Ayers takes occasion to set forth the advantages possessed by Mesurado over any other situation on the coast.

‘In the first place,’ says he, ‘all I had read on the subject, all the information acquired from British Naval Officers, with whom I have talked since my arrival, as well as some other intelligent persons, concur in recommending Mesurado, for many reasons. Bassa is a low level country, consequently must be deprived of refreshing breezes and forever unhealthy. It has no harbor, and six months of the year, landing in boats is impracticable. It has no good watering place.

‘On the contrary, Mesurado Cape is a considerable eminence of land jutting into the sea, high enough to partake of the refreshing sea and land breeze, but not sufficiently elevated to obstruct the vapors and be rendered damp and unhealthy, by exhalations and clouds hanging over it nearly half the day. There is a fertile island situated in the mouth of the river. A battery erected on the Cape would effectually command the harbor and entrance of

the river. There is a pretty good harbor, and good watering place of excellent water. The land at this place is equally fertile with Bassa, or any other part of the coast. With good cultivation it will yield all the productions of the tropical climate.

‘These things taken into consideration, determined us to attempt to negotiate for Mesurado.’

Thus decided on the most essential point, they immediately proceeded to carry their plan into execution. Much time was spent in fruitless palavers; difficulties were perpetually started to embarrass the negotiations; but by policy and prudent management these were at last removed. A purchase of lands was effected, in consideration of certain articles of merchandize to be given, part in hand, and part at a future day. An agreement of cession formally drawn up was signed by six kings on the one side, and Lieutenant Stockton and Dr Ayers on the other. Shortly after the purchase, Dr Ayres writes as follows.

‘We have this morning been on shore and selected a situation for a town, and directed six houses to be built against my return from Sierra Leone with the people.

‘I consider our contract not only as a triumph over savage prejudice, but over European negotiation. For this you are entirely indebted to the energy, sagacity, and perseverance of Lieutenant Stockton. We have purchased a tract of country containing one million of dollars’ worth of land, with the best harbor between Gibraltar and the Cape of Good Hope, an Island containing nine houses, and six others to be built; there are excellent springs of water near the site we have selected for a city; and at the pitch of the Cape, there is an excellent place for watering ships. All this we have purchased in fee simple, for little more than was stipulated to be given for the annual rent of Bassa, and not amounting to more than three hundred dollars. The island at the mouth of the river we have named *Perseverance*, to perpetuate the long and tedious palaver we had in obtaining it.’

To this place all the colonists were removed, as soon as circumstances would permit, from Fourah Bay, with happy anticipations of future quiet and prosperity. We have not room to enumerate the series of disasters, which darkened these prospects, exposed them to new perils, surrounded them with new discouragements, and called them to endure new hardships. We can only add, that some of the neighboring chiefs, who had not been consulted, were dissatisfied with the



contract, threatened to cut off king Peter's head if it were not annulled, and to molest the colonists if they did not remove. King Peter was greatly alarmed, besought Dr Ayres to take back the goods, give up the land, and quell the storm. In these times of turbulence and trouble, Dr Ayres discovered great coolness and good judgment, and so managed the affair as to pacify some of the disaffected kings, intimidate others, and, by bringing their jealousies and interests to counteract each other, to avert the mischiefs, which they might have produced, had they acted in concert. At all events, he retained possession of his purchased territory, and employed the colonists in building houses, and providing for their safety.

In the month of June he took passage for the United States, to acquaint the Society with the condition and wants of the people, and obtain supplies. As yet the colonists had been able to erect but a small number of comfortable dwellings, nor were they free from apprehensions of an attack from the natives. But when the agent offered to take them to Sierra Leone till his return, they almost unanimously declined, and chose to maintain their position. A respectable man of their own color was appointed by Dr Ayres to superintend the establishment.

On the 8th of August Mr Ashmun arrived at Mesurado in the brig Strong, which sailed from Baltimore. Under his charge were thirty five new colonists, among whom were fifteen recaptured Africans from Georgia, redeemed by the means we have above stated, and thus restored to freedom and their native land, through the instrumentality of the Colonization Society. Mr Ashmun discharged the office of temporary agent during the absence of Dr Ayres. The colonists were busy in erecting houses, and cultivating the lands; the natives were quiet, and came peaceably to the Cape, some out of curiosity, others to labor for wages, and others with produce and merchandize.

This state of tranquillity, however, was soon interrupted. symptoms of hostility began to show themselves among some of the chiefs, and it was found that one or two in particular were active in exciting others, and endeavoring to organize a general combination. This was partially effected, and in a few days an assault was made by an armed force vastly superior in numbers and strength to the emigrants. The natives



were repulsed, but with a loss of three or four colonists killed, and several wounded. Very opportunely at this crisis, Captain Spence, in the United States Ship *Cyane*, arrived at Mesurado. He afforded them assistance, built a fort mounting six guns, refitted and armed an old schooner for the defence of the colony, which he left behind, manned with six white and as many colored men. This relief was timely and effectual. Peace was restored; a friendly intercourse was again opened between the two parties; and, when Dr Ayres arrived in the *Oswego* from Baltimore, with sixty additional emigrants, May 24th, 1823, a good understanding seemed to prevail. No other evils threatened, than such as are incident to the privations of a new establishment, and the usual unhealthiness of the rainy season, which had then commenced. These evils, it is true, were severe, but not more so than was to have been expected. The present number of emigrants we believe to be about one hundred and fifty. A vessel, called the *Fidelity*, has been purchased by a company of gentlemen in Baltimore, and set apart as a packet ship to the coast of Africa, exclusively designed, as we understand, to ply regularly between that city and the colony at Cape Mesurado.

Such is a brief historical outline of the American Colonization Society, which, although imperfect in many of its parts, is sufficient to indicate what have been the origin and objects of this Society, its aims and progress, its means and extent, its failures and success. Whatever may be thought of its scheme, our readers will perceive, that no want of zeal, of benevolent feeling, personal sacrifices, or wakeful activity, has marked its proceedings. That no mistakes have been committed, both in speculation and practice, in judgment and the application of means, we are not prepared to say; on the contrary, we think there have been many. From various circumstances, some of these no doubt were unavoidable, but others were evidently the consequence of a too hasty decision, an undue warmth of imagination, and a deficiency of intelligence, which a proper degree of inquiry would have supplied.

For instance, it must have been a star of no good omen, which at the very beginning directed the eyes of the managers to the low, marshy lands of the Sherbro, as a suitable place for settling a colony of living men from the United States. Again, it is unaccountable, that almost every vessel with emi-

grants on board has been allowed to depart, so as to arrive in the first weeks of the rainy season ; and this, after witnessing the fatal effects of one or two disastrous experiments. Another error was the little attention paid to selecting emigrants for the first transportation. From the best accounts they were idle, worthless, and dissolute. With the dregs of disorder thus mingled in the fountain, it could not be expected, that the stream would flow pure and tranquil. These mistakes have run into serious consequences, and ought to have been avoided. Experience, we have reason to believe, has corrected them.

We are next so consider the *advantages*, which may be hoped from the success of the Colonization Society, admitting its plans to be carried into full operation.

These are too numerous and weighty to admit a detailed examination in this place. They spread over a field of unlimited extent, and pertain not more to that unfortunate portion of our race, on whose condition the influence of the Society immediately acts, than to our national policy and prosperity, to our security and happiness, to the value of our possessions and the efficacy of our moral and civil establishments, to the execution of some of our most salutary laws, and to the brightening of the gloomiest prospects, which pass before the eyes of the patriot and philanthropist. On these advantages we can touch only in a rapid manner, and shall content ourselves with a few remarks concerning them, as they relate to this country ; to the abolition of the slave trade ; and to the civilization of Africa.

To estimate the benefits, which a successful operation of the Colonization Society will confer on the people of *this country*, we must look for a moment at the present condition of the colored population, the manner in which the blacks stand related to the whites, and the slaves to those of their own color who are free. We shall here find a series of appalling evils, growing in strength as the ratio of population increases, and bidding defiance to any remedy, which either our political or social institutions can apply. We cannot express our views on this subject in language more appropriate and forcible, than that of Mr Harper, as contained in a letter to the Secretary of the Colonization Society, appended to the First Annual Report.

‘In reflecting,’ says Mr Harper, ‘on the utility of a plan for colonizing the free people of color, with whom our country abounds, it is natural that we should be first struck by its tendency to confer a benefit on ourselves, by ridding us of a population for the most part idle and useless, and too often vicious and mischievous. These persons are condemned to a state of hopeless inferiority and degradation, by their color ; which is an indelible mark of their origin and former condition, and establishes an impassable barrier between them and the whites. This barrier is closed forever by our habits and our feelings, which perhaps it would be more correct to call our prejudices, and which, whether feelings or prejudices, or a mixture of both, make us recoil with horror from the idea of an intimate union with the free blacks, and preclude the possibility of such a state of equality, between them and us, as alone could make us one people. Whatever justice, humanity, and kindness we may feel towards them, we cannot help considering them, and treating them, as our inferiors ; nor can they help viewing themselves in the same light, however hard and unjust they may be inclined to consider such a state of things. We cannot help associating them in our feelings and conduct, nor can they help associating themselves, with the slaves ; who have the same color, the same origin, and the same manners, and with whom they or their parents have been recently in the same condition. Be their industry ever so great, and their conduct ever so correct, whatever property they may acquire, or whatever respect we may feel for their characters, we never could consent, and they never could hope, to see the two races placed on a footing of perfect equality with each other ; to see the free blacks or their descendants visit in our houses, form part of our circle of acquaintance, marry into our families, or participate in public honors and employments. This is strictly true of every part of our country, even those parts where slavery has long ceased to exist, and is held in abhorrence. There is no state in the union, where a negro or mulatto can ever hope to be a member of Congress, a judge, a militia officer, or even a justice of the peace ; to sit down at the same table with the respectable whites, or to mix freely in their society.’

At this stage of our national progress, it is idle to investigate the causes, which have fixed these impressions, and built up these unnatural barriers of separation ; and worse than idle to tell us, what we know full well, that they are unreasonable, unjust, and inhuman. Let the fact be as melancholy as it will, it is nevertheless a fact, and one with which we must be contented, without attempting to palliate the enormities out of which it has arisen, that the course of events,

over which we have had no control, and the customs of society whose power no arm of flesh can counteract, have brought the whole body of the people of color, both bond and free, into a situation fruitful of infinite mischiefs to themselves, and to the whites. That watchful guardian of character and morals, public opinion, exerts its power in vain on the blacks, because this same public opinion has inhumanly branded them with a mark of degradation, which they feel it impossible to erase, and has thrust them into a rank among their fellow men, above which, neither virtue nor knowledge, wisdom nor piety, can enable them to ascend.

In this respect, as Mr Harper has justly observed, there is a wide difference between slavery in America, and in all other countries. *Color* has become a signal of inferiority, by the mere habit of connecting the idea of a slave with that of a dark skin; nor can it be otherwise, while the principles of association hold their place among the first elements of the human mind. Anciently among the Greeks and Romans, as now among the different nations of Europe and Asia, no distinction of color existed between the slave and his master. Then slavery was remediable evil; emancipation washed out the stain; intellect and virtue had their influence; to have been a slave was no bar to any degree of dignity and respect, which future merit might deserve; Terence and Epictetus lost none of the admiration justly due to their talents, because they were slaves; they were not the less caressed by the great, admired by the wise, and honored by all.

No such thing can happen in this country. Give freedom to a slave, and where do you place him? Not above the repulsiveness of popular feeling, not in the rank of the meanest white man, not in a sphere where he can gather around him the affections, or participate the friendships, or be consoled by the sympathy, of the respectable members of the community. He is pressed down, till debasement becomes a habit; he has grovelled, till the desire of rising out of the dust is lost; ambition has withered in its starting freshness; emulation has been blighted in the opening bud; virtue has sunk weary with ill requited exertion; and hope, the last kind comforter of the wretched, has forsaken his bosom, and left him reckless of his condition and his destiny.

The character of slavery, as it exists in this country, renders emancipation to any practicable extent impossible, unless there shall be some place out of the United States, to which free persons of color may be sent, where they may enjoy the civil privileges of which, for wise purposes, it is here necessary that the laws should deprive them; and where they may obtain those means of happiness, which freedom and self government will put into their hands. No dream can be more wild, than that of emancipating slaves, who are still to remain among us free; we unhesitatingly express it as our belief, and we speak from some experience, that the free people of color, as a class in the slave holding states, are a greater nuisance to society, more comfortless, tempted to more vices, and actually less qualified to enjoy existence, than the slaves themselves. In such a state of things, manumission is no blessing to the slave, while it is an evil of the most serious kind to the whites.

This we deem an important consideration, because it brings the subject of emancipation to a single point. We suppose it is the cherished hope of every true patriot, as well as of every benevolent man, that the day will come, when the scourge of slavery shall no longer be felt in the land, when the rod of chastisement shall be withdrawn, and all voices shall join in the song of freedom. There is one possible way, and only one, in which this event can be accomplished, or even approximated. It is *by colonization, and by this alone*, that the mischiefs of slavery, and, what is more to be dreaded than slavery, the living pestilence of a free black population, can be lessened. We take the position to be settled, that no possible remedy can be imagined, while the people of color continue with us, whether as slaves, or as freemen subject to their present legal disabilities. Can any combination of facts more clearly demonstrate the necessity of procuring an asylum for these people, in some place remote from our own territory, or more loudly demand the union of all hearts and hands in aiding the benevolent and well designed beginnings of the Colonization Society? As all hope of future relief rests on some experiment of this sort, who does not see, that the sooner it is begun, the less formidable will be the obstacles to contend against, and the more encouraging the prospects of success?



‘Great as the benefits are,’ says Mr Harper, ‘which we may promise ourselves, from the colonization of the free people of color, by its tendency to prevent the discontent and corruption of our slaves, and to secure to them a better treatment by rendering them more worthy of it, there is another advantage infinitely greater, in every point of view, to which it may lead the way. It tends, and may powerfully tend, to rid us gradually and entirely, in the United States, of slaves and slavery; a great moral and political evil, of increasing virulence and extent, from which much mischief is now felt, and very great calamity in future is justly apprehended. It is in this point of view, I confess, that the scheme of colonization most strongly recommends itself, in my opinion, to attention and support. The alarming danger of cherishing in our bosom a distinct nation, which can never become incorporated with us, while it rapidly increases in numbers, and improves in intelligence; learning from us the arts of peace and war, the secret of its own strength, and the talent of combining and directing its force; a nation which must ever be hostile to us, from feeling and interest, because it can never incorporate with us, nor participate in the advantages which we enjoy; the danger of such a nation in our bosom, needs not be pointed out to any reflecting mind. It speaks not only to our understandings, but to our very senses; and however it may be derided by some, or overlooked by others, who have not the ability or the time, or do not give themselves the trouble, to reflect on, and estimate properly, the force and extent of those great moral and physical causes, which prepare gradually, and at length bring forth, the most terrible convulsions in civil society; it will not be viewed without deep and awful apprehension, by any who shall bring sound minds, and some share of political knowledge and sagacity, to the serious consideration of the subject. Such persons will give their most serious attention to any proposition, which has for its object the eradication of this terrible mischief, lurking in our vitals.’

In the course of his further remarks, Mr Harper draws a vivid picture of the mischievous effects growing out of the colored population, and sets forth the advantages, which the country would gain by gradually releasing itself from this burden. The author speaks not more from deep reflection, than from observation and experience; the accuracy of his knowledge and the soundness of his judgment are alike to be trusted. His views are philosophical; they are just in principle and fact. Revealing the causes of the evils, which now afflict us, he proves them to be radical, and suggests the only method by which they can be torn up and destroyed. Draw

off the free blacks ; then give freedom to the slaves, and let them follow. White laborers will come in and take their place, as fast as the odium of slavery wears away ; labor will be more productive, lands more valuable, and the means of wealth more abundant ; a vicious, worthless, dangerous population will be succeeded by an intelligent and thriving class, who will stand as pillars of strength in the social fabric. This is no impossible task, if rightly undertaken ; so great a change must necessarily be brought about by imperceptible degrees ; the Colonization Society has taken the first step ; let its enterprise be seconded with energy, and the work will in due time be done.

Nor are the benefits at which we have hinted wholly prospective. They began to be realized when the first colonist left the country, and they will increase as others go after them. They will be seen in the improved character and condition of the slaves, who remain ; and in the removal of the temptations to vice and idleness, which are thrown in their way by the free blacks. The slaves will become more peaceful and moral ; they will be happier, and better qualified for enjoying the blessings of liberty, when the day shall come for them to hold a place in a colony of their free brethren. Hence the benefits to the white population in the slave holding states are twofold ; the slaves are made better, and the poisonous influence of the free colored people on society grows weaker as their numbers diminish. These benefits attend the progress of the scheme, which, when it is perfected, will not only form the blacks into a new and improved race, living under their own laws, and relying on their own resources, but will add to the wealth, the physical strength, political weight, and moral and intellectual ascendancy of those districts of country, where the colored population is now the most numerous. And it will not be less a national benefit, for this is one of those cases, above all others, in which the whole has as deep an interest as a part.

Besides these advantages, which pertain to our domestic prosperity, many others may be expected of a commercial nature, from the establishment of a colony in Africa. On this subject it is impossible to speak with the accuracy of calculation, and conjectures would be fruitless ; yet we may affirm, that no part of the world is more fertile, than western

Africa, or better calculated to produce the articles of commerce usually found in tropical climates. A trade of considerable profit has for many years been carried on with the natives along the coast, by individuals both in this country and Europe. The slave trade has been a severe check to the success of lawful enterprise, as it has bartered with the natives and taken in exchange, not the fruits of their industry, the products of their soil, the rewards of honest labor, but the spoils of unnatural wars, commenced on the barbarous principle that strength gives right, and prosecuted with the cruel intention of conquering to enslave. The physical strength of the country has been employed, not in the thriving pursuits of agriculture, and the improvement of the arts, but in sanguinary contests for the plunder of human beings, in murders, kidnappings, and all the atrocious outrages, which savage man, under the dominion of his savage passions, can inflict on his fellow man. The inhuman traffic in slaves has resisted the tide of lawful commerce, by rendering it unnecessary to the natives; but this bar will gradually be removed; justice will not always be deaf to the cries of the sufferer; the energetic measures adopted by the United States and Great Britain will continue, as they have done, to scatter terror in the minds of the miscreant traffickers in blood and crime; and even the Holy Alliance may one day think its plighted faith worth remembering, although in an unguarded hour it was for once pledged in the cause of freedom and humanity. Let the slave trade be driven from the earth, and few countries will afford more inducements to commercial enterprise, than western Africa.\*

The instance of Sierra Leone presents us with no unfavorable view of what may be done in the way of commerce. That colony contended for a long time with many embarrassments; it was owned by a Company, whose means were

\* On the 8th of February, 1815, the Congress of Vienna, consisting of five of the principal European powers, made a solemn engagement, that the traffic in slaves should cease. Three of these powers have since enacted municipal laws to carry this engagement into effect. But here the farce has ended. Except England, not one of the assembled powers has done any thing to prove that it was in earnest, notwithstanding the promptness of the British government to remind them of their failure of duty, and to acquaint them with the perpetual violation of the compact under the sanction of their respective flags. For an interesting and detailed correspondence of the British Ministry with Foreign Powers on this subject, see *Parliamentary Papers on the Slave Trade*, printed by order of the House of Commons, April, 1822. Nos. III. IV.

exhausted before its commercial operations could go into complete effect ; it suffered from wars and privations. Yet all these difficulties have vanished, and the commerce of Sierra Leone has of late been flourishing. Thirty five vessels were entered at that port in the year 1821, registered chiefly in London, and containing goods, whose invoice amount was somewhat more than \$450,000. The duties collected in the colony during the same year amounted to \$28,000. The principal articles exported in return were ivory, palm oil, camwood, gum, beeswax, gold dust, hides, rice, lumber of various sorts, mahogany in logs, coffee, African wild spices, Guinea grains, leopard skins, and mats. These are brought down by the natives to Sierra Leone, and exchanged for cheap cloths, and various articles of European manufacture. The trade is a profitable one to the importer, and, as it extends, will run into new and promising channels. Mesurado is better situated for trade than Sierra Leone ; it stands at the mouth of a much larger river, is in the neighborhood of a more fertile country, and accessible to a larger population in the interior. Why, then, should it not grow up to be a place of commercial importance, employ many of our seamen, add to the tonnage of our shipping, contribute to our revenue, and thus confer a positive good on the nation, at the same time it relieves us of a positive and alarming evil ? Nor ought our views to be confined to Mesurado. Civilization and commerce will go hand in hand, and new sources of profitable intercourse will be opened, in proportion as the natives learn the best modes of supplying their wants.

Let the scheme of colonization next be considered as affecting the *Slave Trade*, and it will be seen, that its benefits, in regard to the suppression of this traffic, are scarcely less important, than those already enumerated.\* In 1808, the earliest time provided by the Constitution, the slave trade was prohibited in the United States, and laws were enacted inflicting severe penalties of fines, imprisonments, and forfeitures on those, who should participate in this guilty traffic. Ten years afterwards this law was improved, by throwing on the defendant the burden of proof, that the colored person intro-

\* For a brief, but clear and well digested history of the laws abolishing the Slave Trade, both in Great Britain and this country, we refer our readers to Mr Walsh's *Appcal*, Sec. IX.



duced by him into the country was lawfully brought in. The laws were still found to be imperfect, as they neither afforded a sufficient check to the trade by American citizens on the coast of Africa, nor provided any means of redeeming and restoring to their country the unfortunate victims, who might, in violation of the laws, be introduced into the States. To correct these imperfections, the act of March 3d, 1819, already mentioned, was passed, authorizing the President to station public vessels on the coast of Africa, make such arrangements as he should deem expedient to rescue and support recaptured negroes, and appoint agents to reside there, and receive such persons of color, as should be sent from this country, or be taken by our cruisers from slave vessels on the coast. One act more was wanting to mark this wicked traffic with its true character, and this act was passed by Congress, May 15th, 1820, wherein it is declared, that every person proved to be engaged in the slave trade is guilty of *piracy*, and shall be *punished with death*. The glory of taking this noble stand against the long cherished, guilty customs of the whole world, and of asserting the claims of humanity on the broad principles of nature and right, was reserved for the American Congress. It is a bright page in the records of time, and the event will be hailed in all coming ages as a memorable epoch in the history of the human race. It has already gained the spontaneous applause of every benevolent heart, not more in this country than in Europe. Let it not be forgotten, that this step was first recommended by a committee of Congress acting on a memorial of the Colonization Society.\*

This memorable law, in connexion with that of 1819, would seem to be little else than a dead letter, without the existence of an American colony on the coast of Africa. Where are

\* Two able and very important decisions have been rendered in our courts under the acts of Congress respecting the Slave Trade. The first was in the case of the *Plattsburgh*, by JUDGE VAN NESS, in the District Court of the United States in New York; and the second, in the case of the French ship *La Jeune Eugenie*, in the Circuit Court at Boston, December, 1821, by JUDGE STORY. The latter opinion is remarkable for the force of argument with which it defends the high ground it takes, and the conclusive proof it exhibits, that the solemn acts of the great governments of the civilized world, denouncing the slave trade as an offence against justice and humanity, have stigmatized this traffic as a violation of the laws of nations, and that courts of justice are authorized to form their decisions on this principle. See the *Case of the Jeune Eugenie*, as reported by William P. Mason, Esq.



the agents to be stationed? What security will they have for their persons? How are they to preserve the dignity of public agents of the American government, or in what manner can they discharge the duties of their office, in opposition to the interests of the people, whose protection they claim?

In the President's next message to Congress, after the above act was passed, he observes, in referring to the agents whom he had appointed, 'they will have power to select the most suitable place on the coast of Africa, at which all persons who may be taken under this act shall be delivered to them, *with an express injunction to exercise no power founded on the principle of colonization*, or other power than that of performing the benevolent offices above recited, [providing for the recaptured negroes] by the permission and sanction of the existing government under which they may establish themselves.' But what existing government is there on the coast of Africa, which is not engaged in the slave trade? And is it to be credited, that any such government would give permission for an agency to be established, whose professed object should be to oppose its customs and discourage its trade? We hold the thing to be impossible. While the agents were supplied with presents enough to bribe the kings into acquiescence, the case might not be entirely hopeless, but tempt their cupidity by letting loose in their dominions a cargo of recaptured negroes, and we will answer for their integrity no longer. It is not a characteristic of the untutored mind to resist the stronger motive, especially when the force of habit accords with the impulse of interest. And then it is not likely, that the slavers on the coast would regard with a friendly eye these enemies of their commerce, acting under the sanction of a foreign power. Let the subject be viewed as it may, and there will not be a shadow of hope, that two unprotected agents, fixing themselves among the natives, could do anything towards an effectual execution of the laws of the United States. They would effect little else, than to supply the slave market in Africa to the full amount of recaptured persons, whom they should receive.

That such a scheme should have been contemplated by the Executive, was evidently the result of necessity; Congress had directed agents to be appointed, but had not looked forward to the thing of chief importance, the mode in which they

should be so employed as to render their agency of any practical value. Thus situated, the President had no alternative, but to appoint agents, and instruct them as he did. Happily, however, the experiment was not tried. The government made common cause with the Colonization Society; the agents of both were directed to act in concert, and, as far as we can learn, they have thus acted till the present time. We believe, indeed, that both agencies are now vested in Dr Ayres alone. For all the good effects, which have grown out of the law of 1819, the government is indebted to the Colonization Society. The latter has no doubt received eminent services from the former, and probably has been able to sustain its operations in Africa only through the aids thus received, but still the project of a colony belonged to the Society, and its efforts have been turned exclusively to that object.

The President was extremely guarded in his instructions to the agents, and imposed on them 'an express injunction to exercise no power founded on the principle of colonization.' We do not intend here to enter on the topic of colonization in its political bearings; these are unquestionably important, and there may be reasons why it is inexpedient for the United States to found colonies abroad for any purpose, although we have never seen them stated. The present is obviously a case in which the laws of the Union, and some of its laws of first moment, cannot be executed, except through the medium of a colony. Notwithstanding the President's cautious injunction, the agents have exercised no power to any purpose, which was not 'founded on the principle of colonization.' Is it said, that this was only a private colony, to which the agents resorted as affording them protection, and facilities for discharging their duty? Let this be granted, and our position will then hold the same, that they have done nothing except through the aids of a colony.

And, moreover, a slight inspection will show, that the colony at Mesurado wants nothing to make it a public colony already, but the mere form of recognition on the part of the government. To all practical purposes it has been such from the beginning. Lieutenant Stockton of the United States Navy was one of the signers to the treaty, by which the land was ceded to the Society, and he afforded such assistance as

was requisite in establishing the colonists on the ground. Similar aids have been rendered by all the public vessels on the coast. Captain Spence built a fort on the Cape at the public charge, supplied it with guns, and the American flag was hoisted on its battlements. He also left an armed schooner for the better protection of the colonists. The present agent, Dr Ayres, is appointed under the law of Congress, and supported by the government. These facts we state as evidence, that the laws against the slave trade cannot be put into execution, except 'on the principle of colonization.' All the efforts, which have as yet been made, have forced themselves of their own accord into this channel, and any attempt to compass the object on other principles would end in a total failure. We repeat then, that to the Colonization Society belongs the praise of having projected the only practicable scheme of carrying the abolition laws into effect, and affirm, that these laws will be executed in proportion as the government, either directly or indirectly, acts on the principles of this Society. Let the starting point be where it will, here is the centre to which every successful movement will come at last.

Many facts might be collected in this place illustrative of what is above stated, and rendering palpable the labors of the Colonization Society, not more in promoting the cause of humanity, than aiding the government in the execution of its laws. The generous and timely interference of the Society in behalf of the recaptured Africans in Georgia has been mentioned, and also the happy issue to which this interference led, in calling the attention of Congress to the subject, and procuring the passage of laws by which all persons of color, criminally introduced into the United States, are under the protection of the general government.

Another event of more recent date has occurred, which equally proves the vigilance of the Society, and the benefits of its labors.

Several months ago a vessel came into the harbor of Baltimore, which, from various circumstances, was thought to have negroes unlawfully detained on board. So strong was the ground of suspicion, that a few individuals took on themselves the responsibility of searching the vessel, and they found concealed eleven negroes, who were foreigners, incapable of

speaking or understanding the English language. A prosecution was accordingly entered against the captain, as being engaged in the slave trade; but as he affirmed, that the negroes were his own property lawfully acquired, and no proof to the contrary could be adduced, he was acquitted. The law demands, that in all doubtful claims to the property of slaves, the labor of proof shall rest on the claimant, and as the captain, in the present case, could produce no such proof, the negroes were detained by the court, although he was permitted to escape. Through the humanity of some of the active members of the Colonization Society, these negroes were provided for, by being distributed among several families in the neighborhood of Baltimore, to remain till they should learn the language, and be able to express their wishes in regard to their future destination.

Fortunately about this time, a young African by the name of Wilkinson, a native of the Susoo country on the Rio Pongas, arrived in Baltimore. Some years ago a chief of the Susoos entrusted two of his sons to the care of the captain of a French vessel, trading in the Rio Pongas, who promised to take them to the West Indies, have them educated, and return them at the end of four years. When the stipulated time had gone by, and nothing was heard of the boys, Wilkinson was despatched to the West Indies to search them out. He succeeded in finding them, but had the mortification to learn, that the treacherous captain had not been true to his word; he had deserted the boys, and they were turned over to work with the slaves. Wilkinson recovered them, however, without difficulty, sent them to their father, and came himself to Baltimore to take passage home in the colonization packet. He had already been in England, and spoke our language with fluency.

Soon after his arrival he visited some of the recaptured Africans just mentioned, and discovered that they came from the region bordering on his own country, and spoke a dialect, which he well understood, although it was not his native Susoo tongue. They were overjoyed at seeing a person with whom they could converse, but were incredulous when he told them, that they were free, and might return home if they chose. They said he was deceiving them, that they knew they were slaves, and should never again see their native land, their



relatives, and friends. So thoroughly were they impressed with the melancholy conviction of being in slavery, that no protestations on his part could make them believe in his entire sincerity. They exclaimed with raptures at the thought of freedom, and of going back to Africa, but would not hope that such a dream could ever be realized.

The situation of these persons was made known by the Colonization Society to the President of the United States, who said, that if proper certificates were given of their desire to return, the government would pay the expense of transportation. The navy agent at Baltimore was ordered to have them examined. They were brought together for this purpose, and as the examination could only be carried on through Wilkinson as interpreter, he gave his testimony under oath. We shall speak of this interesting examination nearly in the words of Mr Coale, Secretary of the Baltimore Auxiliary Society, who was present, and took an account of the proceedings in writing.

The general question was put to them severally, whether they wished to remain in this country as freemen, or be sent to Mesurado, and thence, if practicable, to their homes? Dowrey was the first, who was called to answer. He was a chief in his own country, of whom Wilkinson had some knowledge. He replied; 'I wish to go home, I wish to see my father, my wife, and children, I have been at Mesurado, I live but three days' walk from that place.' Barterou answered; 'Let me go home, I have a wife, I have two children, I live a morning's walk from Dowrey.' The next person called was Mousah, the son of a highly respectable chief, with whom Wilkinson was personally acquainted. He had been living with General Harper, and when asked if he was not disposed to remain, and be instructed, and go home hereafter and teach his countrymen, he replied; 'General Harper is a good man, he will give me clothes and food, and be kind to me, but he cannot give me my wife and children.' When the general question was put to Cubangerie, he replied; 'Why do you ask this over and over? Do you not know that nothing is so dear as a man's home? I am so rejoiced at the thought of returning, that I want words to express my thanks.' Mazzey said; 'My mother is living, my father is living, I have two sisters, I shall be grateful to those, who



send me to my family and friends.' The answer of Fanghah was; 'I shall be joyful to go home, I have a father, mother, wife, sister, and three children to meet me in my own country.' Corree said, that all he desired was to be landed in Africa, and he should soon find his way home. Banhah made nearly the same reply.

After these eight persons were examined, they expressed great anxiety to be joined by two of their companions not present. These had been placed with a man, who, it seems, was unwilling to part with them, and had reported that they wished to remain. This proved to be a false pretence, set up with a view to profit by the labor of the negroes; and whatever may be the power of the law in such a case, it will be difficult to make it appear in the eye of justice in any better light, than the crime of being engaged in the slave trade. A writ on a fictitious suit was taken out against the negroes, and they were thus released from thralldom, and brought to the place of examination. When they arrived, their companions sprang with ecstasies to meet them, embraced them again and again, caught them in their arms, raised them from the ground, and continued for half an hour at intervals to embrace and shake them by the hand. Nothing could exceed their joy when told that they were free, and would sail in a day or two for Africa.

These ten persons, thus providentially rescued from perpetual slavery, and made happy in the anticipations of again beholding their native land, and of carrying gladness to many a weeping, disconsolate heart, owed their deliverance chiefly to the Colonization Society. They have gone home to prove to their countrymen and friends, that white men are not all barbarians, traffickers in human flesh and artificers of human misery, but that the flame of benevolent feeling may sometimes kindle and burn, even in the breasts of this portion of their race, whom they had hitherto known only as catchers of their own species, and workers in crime. We know not the springs of other men's joys, but as for ourselves, call it weakness, or enthusiasm, or what you will, we frankly confess, that the heartfelt delight of having been instrumental in restoring these men to freedom and happiness, would have been to us a double compensation for all the embarrassments, rebuffs, and obstacles, numerous and severe as they have

been, which the members of the Society have thus far experienced. Had they brought to pass from the beginning only this one deed, we would lift up our voice in praise of their noble achievement, and say they had been blessed with a good reward. These rescued Africans, full of gratitude for their deliverers, sailed with Wilkinson in the *Fidelity* for Mesurado, in the month of October last. Dr Ayres had directions to send them home as soon as they arrived. One boy still remains. He spoke a different language from any of the others, and could not be understood by them. He will doubtless be returned, when he shall have learnt our language sufficiently to make known his wishes.

In regard to the advantages, which may be expected to *Africa itself* from a colony in that country, they are too numerous to be mentioned in detail, and the most of them too obvious to require much remark. From the time the eloquence of Wilberforce, and the high minded, untiring zeal of Clarkson, first awakened a slumbering world to a recognition of the dearest, although long forgotten rights of humanity, down to the present period, every day has proved the grand secret of African degradation to consist in the slave trade. Abolish this effectually and forever, and you have done all; you have raised a prostrate continent to a proud eminence in the rank of physical and moral being. The laws of civilized countries will avail something, but ten-fold greater will be the influence of a well ordered colony residing in the midst of the people, teaching them the arts of life, showing them the value of mental and moral improvement, and convincing them by example, that civilization in all its branches is the spring and the safeguard of human happiness. The spirit, which cherishes the unholy practice of slavery, holds dominion in the minds of the people, planted there, and nurtured there, it is true, by the avarice, cupidity, and crimes of civilized barbarians, yet it must be rooted out and destroyed in its source, before the evil will cease. Let the navies of the world be combined, and line the coast of Africa from Tangier to Babelmandel, and even make it certain that not a slave shall escape, this would not be abolishing the slave trade. The spirit would still lurk in the vitals of one hundred and fifty millions of people, and even in this sphere, narrow compared with its present extent, it would

show itself in all the miseries of intestine wars and plunderings, misrule in government, and heartrending separations in the domestic and social circles.

As a first step, the slave trade must cease; the work of humanity will then be commenced; the door of legalized crime will be closed, and the dawn of innocence will rise to witness the expiring struggles of guilt. Next enlighten the natives, and the cause of humanity will be completely vindicated; nature will teach the rest; governments will grow up, founded on the eternal basis of truth and right; peace and happiness will reign in the land; the horn of plenty will pour its abundant stores at the feet of the laborer; wisdom will assert her empire in the mind; the affections will bloom with new freshness and fragrance in the heart; and the injured, insulted, degraded African will rise to a level with his species, and prove to his deriding oppressors, that the same God, who has stamped his image on other men, has in equal kindness bestowed on him in full measure the sources of feeling, the power of intellect, and all the ennobling principles of human nature.

These two objects, the suppression of the slave trade, and the practical civilization of Africa, may be pursued together. Each will advance the other. A colony on the coast, at the same time it affords facilities for carrying into effect the laws against the slave trade, will be a post of observation to detect illegal traffickers, and, by heightening the risk, to discourage the boldness of adventurers. The hiding places of mischief will be revealed, and proper remedies applied; the artifices of iniquity will be laid open, and the machinations of deliberate crime frustrated. The interests of a colony will harmonize with its favorable circumstances, and prompt it to watchfulness, and a speedy exposure of abuses. It can give timely information to public cruisers, and guide their efforts to a more efficient service.

But the good effects of a colony have yet a much higher character, as seen in the local and moral improvement of the natives within its influence. Wars in Africa are terrific; like armies of devouring locusts, they pass over the land and leave a depopulated desert behind. 'To give no quarter to an enemy,' says Governor Ludlam, 'or to put to death prisoners taken in the field, would doubtless reduce their num-

ber ; but men, and men in arms, would be the only sufferers ; and the slaughter of an army would tend to put an end to the war. In Africa, however, war is made equally on men, women, and children ; those who are unable to lift a weapon are as much its victims, as those who carry a musket, and a chief can never want funds for carrying on a war, so long as his enemy has abundance of people.' It is to be remembered, however, that the motives, which drive Africans to war, are different from those of all other nations. They are not stimulated by revenge, like the savage Indians ; nor hurried on by the impulse of wanton cruelty, like the Moors of the desert ; nor restless with the ambition of rising above their neighbors, and extending their dominion, like more civilized warriors. The mere love of indolence, and desire of ministering to their wants and pleasures with the least trouble ; these, unsubdued by any power of moral principle, which refinement would quicken, are the original springs of African wars. These springs are kept in action, if they were not created, by the slave trade. The natives steal and sell one another, because purchasers are always at hand ; they go out to battle for the same reason, and exult in victory only as its trophies of human victims will glut the avarice of the slavers on the coast.

The same causes have introduced among them a kind of judiciary system, not less unprincipled and shocking to humanity. An accused person is summoned before a chief, or headman, on the merest pretence of misdemeanor, subjected to a mock trial, and condemned to slavery ; and it may be the unfortunate sufferer is one of the domestics or family connexions of his accuser and judge. Chiefs will combine, and hold palavers on another chief, and sentence him to a fine of a certain number of slaves. These he must procure by violently seizing his own people, or sending marauders to kidnap them among his neighbors. Courts of this sort, which were introduced by the slave trade, are sanctioned by custom, and upheld by the laws of the land. Another terrible mode of trial is by the *Red Water*, which is generally on the charge of witchcraft. Few survive this operation. All who die are accounted guilty, and the common result is, that several persons belonging to the family of the deceased are doomed to slavery.



We are here speaking of customs, which time has matured, and which the natives do not suppose to be criminal. What more probable remedy can be held out for these local and formidable evils than colonization? Let the slave trade be abandoned, and the thrifty business of man-stealing and man-killing will no doubt droop, and perhaps be neglected, because it will be unprofitable. But to what honest and useful occupation shall the natives then resort? The arts of industry they have never learnt, and its happy effects they have never experienced. If, however, they can in the meantime witness the rising prosperity of a separate body of colonists, who enjoy no local advantages over themselves, and who gain strength and gather comforts around them, by a course of life directly opposed to the one, which they have pursued, will not such an example touch the rudest mind, and compel it to think and deliberate? Will it not slowly unrivet the chains of habits, which do such violence to nature, unlock the prison house of the moral sense, and give freedom and energy to the long enthralled intellect? Such will be the natural progress of events. We have the uniform testimony of writers, and what is more than all, the authority of Park, that the negro character is mild, gentle, and generous, not prone to resentments, and equally ready to forget, and reluctant to inflict an injury. This is far from being a warlike, or vicious character; such odious traits, as it now possesses, have been engrafted into it by hands better practised than their own in the devices of wickedness; and these must be removed by a process as gradual as that, by which they have taken so deep a root, and acquired so firm a trunk. Better habits will grow out of better principles; the ferocity of ignorance, and the bane of indolence, will disappear before the rising light of knowledge.

Subsidiary to these great ends will be the mental culture, and religious instruction, derived to the natives from the direct labors and indirect influence of a colony. We have no room here to engage in a defence of the African intellect. We shall leave it, for the present, to the Abbè Gregoire and his followers to search out the existence and the merits of African literature, and to Buffon and the naturalists to prove from the physical organization of the negroes, that they are inferior to other branches of the human race. We have as



little disposition to magnify as to depreciate their native powers, and with all our sensibility to the injuries they have suffered, we have no eulogies to bestow on their intellectual greatness, nor any encouragements to offer, from what they have done, that extraordinary results are to be expected hereafter. We do say, however, that a fair experiment has not been tried. Place Europeans under the same train of circumstances for centuries, and we know not on what principles of human nature, or maxims of philosophy, or rules of political calculation, it could be supposed they would act differently, or raise themselves higher. In their own country, the negroes are an inquisitive people ; they have a high respect for learning, and are fond of having their children instructed.

Wherever they have been visited by the whites, they have expressed a willingness to have teachers come among them, and to send their youths abroad to be educated. It has been no uncommon thing for chiefs to put their sons under the care of captains of slave ships, who have taken them to the West Indies, placed them at school for a stated time, and then sent them home. Children from the neighborhood of Sierra Leone have been educated in England, and then returned to their friends. Sixteen years ago there were eight missionaries in the Susoo country, who enjoyed the protection of the chiefs, and were encouraged by them to establish schools. They lived in tranquillity, and were successful, till they undertook to interfere in matters of state, suggest changes in the government and laws, and thus, in the spirit of the more shrewd Jesuits, to act the triple character of schoolmasters, divines, and politicians. They were then dismissed from the country, though not without regret on the part of the chiefs, who were pleased with the instructions they had given. A valuable monument of their labors still exists in a Susoo Grammar and Vocabulary, a translation of a part of the New Testament, and several tracts. This task was chiefly performed by Mr Brunton, aided by a number of Susoo youths, who had lived in England. Among the Susoo people, whose language is spoken over a territory larger than Great Britain, these works are now to be found.

The Arabic is spoken and written by a few persons in nearly all parts of the interior, of which any knowledge has been obtained. Young persons are sent to a great distance

to be instructed in Arabic learning, which, after all, consists in little else, than being able to read the Koran, and speak and write the language. We have been made acquainted, from the best authority, with one instance, in which a young man was sent to Timbuctoo for an education of this sort, from the banks of the Rio Pongas, a distance of fifteen hundred miles. Some of the more distinguished chiefs correspond with one another in Arabic, and give passports to travellers in the same language. We have before us a translation of an address originally written in Arabic, and sent three years ago by Dakhaba, king of Bambarana, to the 'kings and chiefs of the West,' or in humbler phrase, to the governor of Sierra Leone, and king George of England. It is couched in a gorgeous style of oriental hyperbole, worthy of a Dey of Algiers, or a Bashaw of Tripoli, and shows at least, that the sense of regal dignity is far from being extinct in the breasts of the monarchs, whose dominions spread over the sources of the Niger and the Gambia. We have also seen a specimen of Arabic composition from the hand of an African, now a slave in this country, which was not only written with readiness and ease, but with striking elegance of chirography. He is from the interior of Africa, and was taught in his own country.

These facts prove all we desire in the present connexion, which is, that the natives of Africa are in some degree sensible of their ignorance, and willing to be made wiser. Could a more propitious beginning be imagined, or a field be better prepared for culture? You have no obstinacy to conquer, no wild and restless wanderings of a thoroughly savage disposition to tame, no contempt of knowledge and the refinement of civilized life to soften, no torpid indifference to rouse, no spectres of a paralyzing superstition to dispel. You have minds to deal with naturally simple and artless, tractable in temper, docile, ready to learn, and requiring only the use of judicious means properly applied.

These positions are verified, not more by the above facts, than by the instance of Sierra Leone. In the twelve schools of that colony, there are now two thousand persons of different ages, under the care of about thirty teachers. Their general good deportment, and progress in learning, are represented, by the committees appointed to examine the schools, in terms

the most flattering. They were all recaptured from slave ships. Some have already become teachers themselves, and gone out to instruct the tribes bordering on the colony. The mechanic arts, agriculture, the plainer branches of manufactures, and whatever gives a spur to invention, value to labor, a right direction to power, strength to morals, and refinement to thought, may well be reckoned among the elements of an African education, which the natives are glad to learn and capable of receiving.

But with none of these things can the natives become acquainted, except through the agency of colonization. They must be taught at home, or not at all; if they are ever to be raised to a higher rank, and to know the blessings of civilized life, it must be on the soil, which gave them birth. And what should prevent a colony, founded on just principles, from communicating to the extent of its influence all needed instruction? We do not expect the natives of Africa will become at once adepts in science, literature, or the arts; nor do we look for the time, when they are to be statesmen, orators, poets, philosophers. Whether they will ever shine as luminaries in the world of mind and sentiment, is a question we are not ambitious to solve. Whether their future poets will rival the ancient bards of Dahomy, who are said to have rehearsed poems, which took up several days in the recital, may be left to the speculation of the curious. Even central Africa boasts of its antiquity, and, if the legends tell truth, when Orpheus was charming the forests into life, and Hesiod was tracing the genealogies of the gods, and weaving nature and time into song, and Homer was singing the wars of the Greeks and the wanderings of Ulysses, then the bards of Nigritia were celebrating the exploits of their heroes, and publishing the records of their renown in the ears of listening kings and admiring nations. If such times have been, they are long gone by, and it is not among our fond dreams, that they are soon to be revived. Nay, we are willing to confess, that we hope more from the descendants of the countrymen of Hesiod and Homer, even under the cruel rod of a Turkish despotism, and what is scarcely less discouraging, the unfeeling neglect of a northern autocracy, which dreads that liberty should breathe in the earth, than we do from the degenerate Dahomans, or their equally unfortunate brethren of other

nations, who have suffered for ages under the discipline of the slave trade. But notwithstanding this concession, we hold, that from competent teachers, and the example of a well organized community before their eyes, they may learn enough to qualify them for the happy state of society, which consists in a right use of the bounties of nature, and a proper estimate of the value of labor, industry, and virtue. Nothing more is hoped or desired from the immediate effects of a colony.

In regard to religious instruction, no heathens can be so easily initiated into the principles of christianity, as the inhabitants of central and western Africa. They believe for the most part in a Supreme Being, but their notions are obscure, without system or consistency. They have no conceptions of the attributes of God, nor do they ascribe the operations of nature to his agency. When Artus told them, that their gold, fruits, and flocks were given them by the Deity, they replied, ‘the earth gives us gold, the earth yields us maize and rice, the sea affords us fish, but if we do not labor ourselves, we may starve before our God will help us.’ They believe in an evil and good principle, existing in distinct forms, each of which has power over them; and they are also strongly affected by charms, termed fetiches on the coast, and Obi in the West Indies. It matters not of what material the charm is made; when once consecrated in the imagination of the person whose reverence it commands, it is supposed to have a power little inferior to that of the Deity, and to hold in its mysterious virtues the destiny of mortals.

Such a religion has too few points of consistency to acquire any strength by age; its principles are too vague to gain a permanent entrance into the mind; it has nothing to engage the fancy or captivate the understanding. It is not like the magnificent fabric of Chinese theology, made sacred by the venerated names of ancient statesmen and sages, standing as the firmest pillar of the empire, and secured from innovation by the impermeable panoply of a language, which to change would be to destroy. Nor is it like the more philosophical, and perhaps more ancient system of the Hindoos, rendered imposing by its thousand volumes of commentaries, and perpetuated by an unceasing, overgrown priesthood. Nor is it like the monstrous folly of the Tartars, where the wretched idea of a Grand Lama has driven common sense from the



minds of millions, and united them in an unconquerable system of visionary absurdity. In short, the world does not contain an uncivilized people, more free from the bias of heathenism, than the negroes.

The task of plucking out errors, and eradicating deep rooted superstitions, which is so formidable in most cases, is one of little difficulty with them. The soil is already prepared for the seed ; and this only requires to be scattered with a careful hand, and nurtured with gentleness and skill. The Mahometans have had good success, and many persons in the central parts of Africa have been brought over to their faith. What then may we not expect from the simple and engaging truths of christianity ? Shall we say, that the sublime doctrines of Jesus, and the holy precepts of his religion, have less power to convert the heathen, than the profane vagaries of the Arabian impostor ; or that the rude followers of the latter have more zeal, than the humble disciples of the former ? What christian will listen to so ungracious an imputation ? The inference must be allowed, then, both from a view of the religion of the negroes, and the success of Mahometanism among them, that they are better prepared, than any other barbarous people, to receive religious instruction and adopt new principles of faith. Thus may a colony be accessary to the advancement of religious truth, which could come from no other quarter, as well as to the civil improvement, temporal interests, and social happiness of the people among whom it is stationed.

Having now closed what we proposed to say on the *advantages* of colonization to this country and Africa, we proceed to a few hints on its *practicability*.

The objection, which has been urged with considerable emphasis against the Colonization Society, that the scheme of forming a colony in Africa is impracticable, we think sufficiently answered by the fact, that numerous colonies have been settled there, some of which are now of long standing. The Portuguese, the French, the Danes, and the English, have establishments scattered along the coast from Cape Verde to the Cape of Good Hope, which must no doubt be profitable to those governments, or they would not have been maintained till the present time. More than a century ago the French established a post on the Senegal, upwards of four hundred



miles from its mouth ; at Congo the Portuguese have grown into a numerous colony ; and at the southern extremity of Africa, the Dutch and English together have spread over a country larger than the southern peninsula of Europe. As it is not, therefore, a question to be soberly discussed, whether it is possible for America to do what half a dozen other nations have done, the notion that colonization is impracticable hardly deserves to be considered.

We may here revert again to Sierra Leone, as affording an instance more directly in point for our present purpose, because it was founded on principles nearly allied to those of the Colonization Society. It was started by a private company, and the original settlers were taken from abroad. At the close of the American Revolution many negroes, who had left their masters during the war, and gone over to the British standard, were dispersed in the Bahama Islands and Nova Scotia, where the white loyalists took refuge. Some found their way to London. Four hundred of these were shipped by their own consent to Sierra Leone in 1787. The black settlers in Nova Scotia became dissatisfied with the rigorous treatment they received, and complained to the British ministry. Emigration was thought the only remedy, and twelve hundred accepted the invitation to be transported at the expense of the government to Sierra Leone, where they arrived five years after those from London. It thus appears, that the colony at Sierra Leone was first settled by negroes, who had been slaves in this country, habituated to the same climate, and possessing the same character, as the persons with whom it is contemplated to supply the new American colony. The Maroons from Jamaica did not arrive till 1805. The land was obtained by purchase of the natives.

For some time the colony proceeded but slowly ; it was attacked by the French ; the natives were hostile ; sickness made its ravages ; want and fatigue caused despondency. But these difficulties were conquered in due time ; the lands were cleared ; villages are now rising up, churches and schools are multiplying, agriculture has become a settled occupation, and society has assumed a shape denoting the regularity and happiness of civilized life. The Sierra Leone Colony now consists of twelve thousand inhabitants, nearly *ten thousand* of whom are recaptured Africans, thus rescued

from an inhuman bondage, which would otherwise have been entailed on them and their posterity forever. Why shall not the colony at Mesurado accomplish as much in the same time? And should it promise no more, who will refuse to give his heart and his hands to a work, which may save ten thousand of his fellow beings from slavery and wretchedness?

It has been a good deal insisted on, as a proof of the impracticability of colonization, that emigrants could not be induced to embark. Experience has shown the futility of this objection. Volunteers have ever been ready in greater numbers, than the Society could receive, and at this time the names of more persons are on the list of application, than it would be prudent to send at once. They should not be suffered to go out faster than they can be well provided for, and we presume that two or three hundred a year would be quite as many as could find comfortable quarters in a new colony. The ratio of capacity for receiving others will of course increase very rapidly; it will be in proportion to the surplus of labor among the resident colonists over what is necessary to supply their immediate wants. The avails of the rest can be appropriated to the use of new adventurers, in supplying them with food, houses, and other requisites of life. On this principle the time will come, in the natural progress of things, when there will be ability to provide for emigrants in Africa as fast as the condition of the blacks, and the established order of society, will permit them to depart from this country. The early disasters at Sierra Leone were owing in a great measure to the numbers landed at once, without comfortable dwellings, clothes, provisions, and good attendance in sickness. Our own colony has experienced similar calamities from the same causes.

Again, it has been said, that the expense of transportation is so great, as to prevent its being carried to any available extent. This objection is founded on a false estimate of facts, as any one may be convinced, who will thoroughly examine the subject.\* The Society has sent out emigrants at fifty dollars a piece, and it might be done much lower, if the business were prosecuted on a large scale. Many

\* For an elaborate and ingenious calculation in regard to the expense of transportation, see extracts from the Frederic County Auxiliary Society, in the *Appendix to the Fourth Annual Report of the Colonization Society*, p. 57.

colored persons have property more than sufficient to pay their own passage, and laws might be passed to cause others to save their earnings, till they amounted to enough for their passage money. Besides, what should prevent some of our public vessels being employed in this work, and at an expense very little exceeding that, which is now required to keep them in service? And last of all, why should not a portion of the national revenue be appropriated to an object, which so vitally affects the rising interests of our confederacy?

Let it be our pride to follow, as far as the genius of our institutions will permit, the liberal and high minded example of a younger republic. The Government of Colombia has not only decreed, that 'all, of whatever color, are entitled to the same privileges as white men,' but has enacted a statute for the gradual abolition of slavery within its own territory, by establishing a manumission fund, arising out of a tax on a portion of the property left by persons at their death. Why may not our Congress so far walk in the steps of the generous friends of humanity in Colombia, as to appropriate a reasonable amount to relieve the country from the nuisance and terror of the free black population? Or, should the argument from humanity and this example be thought of little weight, why should not such a measure be prompted by a regard for the deepest concerns and supreme welfare of the nation?\*

The unhealthiness of the climate is another objection, usually advanced against the practicability of a settlement in Africa. In respect to this, we beg permission again to refer to the European colonies, which have been so long in operation. That the coast of western Africa is unhealthy to northern constitutions, is not denied; but no proof has been exhibited, that it is more so than other tropical climates, or even the alluvial districts of the United States. Let a colony from the northern and middle states be transported to the low and fertile parts of the Carolinas, or to the banks of the Missis-

\* The law of manumission passed by the Congress of Colombia, July 19th, 1821, is introduced by the following preamble; 'That, according to the eternal principles of reason, justice, and the wisest policy, no republican government, truly just and philanthropic, can exist without seeking to alleviate all those classes of mankind, that are degraded and unhappy; and that an object of such importance to the Republic ought to be realized, and slavery be gradually abolished, so that, without compromising the public tranquillity, or affecting the rights, which the proprietors really possess, the freedom of all the inhabitants of Colombia may in a few years be ensured.'

issippi, in the warm season, and the mortality would be much greater, than has been known in Africa, even in the midst of the fatal rains. By Meredith, Wadstrom, Dr Lind, and others, who have had an opportunity of being informed, it is stated with confidence, that the country about Sierra Leone is equal in salubrity to the most healthy of the West India Islands. The mortality of the colonists in Africa has not been more alarming, than it was among the original settlers of New England, and other parts of America. The unusual sickness of the first emigrants to Sierra Leone, and of those gone from this country, depended on incidental causes, many of which have no necessary connexion with the climate, and which will never occur to the same degree, when the forests shall be cleared, the miasmata of decayed vegetation removed, and the people supplied with comfortable habitations, and wholesome food. On the whole, there seems no reason to suppose western Africa more unhealthy, than other parts of the world, to which people have emigrated for centuries, and where they have built cities, established governments, and grown into empires.

The local situation selected for our present colony enjoys many positive advantages. In speaking of the tracts of country around Cape Monte and Cape Mesurado, Dr Leyden says, 'These districts have been described by Des Marchais, Villault, Philips, Atkins, Bosman, and Smith, as pleasant, salubrious, and fertile.' Again he adds, 'Cape Mesurado is a detached mountain, steep and elevated towards the sea, with a gentle declivity on the land side. The adjacent country is extremely fertile, producing sugar cane, indigo, and cotton, without cultivation.'\*

\* See Murray's *Historical Account of Discoveries and Travels in Africa*, Vol. II. p. 290. On the fertility of Africa, and its advantages for colonization, Mungo Park writes in the most decided and encouraging manner, after having seen more of the interior than all other European travellers besides. 'It cannot admit of a doubt,' says he, 'that all the rich and valuable productions, both of the East and West Indies, might easily be naturalized, and brought to the utmost perfection, in the tropical parts of this immense continent. Nothing is wanting to this end but example to enlighten the minds of the natives, and instruction to enable them to direct their industry to proper objects. It was not possible for me to behold the wonderful fertility of the soil, the vast herds of cattle, proper both for labor and food, and a variety of other circumstances favorable to colonization and agriculture, and reflect withal on the means, which presented themselves of a vast inland navigation, without lamenting that a country, so abundantly gifted and favored by nature, should remain in its



No man is better acquainted with the coast of Africa, probably, than Sir George R. Collier, who has been the chief commander of the British squadron stationed there for three or four years. In his Second Report to the British government, respecting the settlements in Africa, he thus alludes to the attempt to form a colony at Sherbro. 'Had America,' he observes, 'who, excepting Great Britain, appears more in earnest than any other nation, established her lately attempted settlement at Cape Mesurado, or even at Cape Monte, she would at least have secured a more healthful, and by far a more convenient spot, than her late ill chosen one in the Sherbro. And an establishment by America, either at Cape Monte, or Cape Mesurado, would have afforded to the friends of humanity the most rational hopes, that in the immediate neighborhood of the American colony the demand for slaves would have been checked, and thus a settlement would have been formed, useful to the purposes of civilization; and from its actual, though distant intercourse with the frontiers of Gaman and Ashantee, have opened the line of lucrative speculation to the American merchant, and with the additional advantage of doing so without interfering in any way with the prosperity of the British Colony of Sierra Leone.' These remarks are of more practical value, than volumes of speculations penned in this country, founded on conjecture, or deduced from abstract principles. They are from a person, who enjoyed the best opportunities for observation, repeatedly traversed the coast, and whose business it was to supply his government with accurate knowledge. On this testimony, connected with that of our own agents, we are willing to rest, and are satisfied with the conviction, that Mesurado affords all the requisite facilities for building up an establishment, which ought to receive the cordial support of every friend of his species, every lover of right and freedom, and every sincere patriot in this country.

The formidable encroachment, which the present article has already made on our accustomed limits, compels us to

present savage and neglected state. Much more did I lament, that a people of manners so gentle and benevolent should either be left as they now are, immersed in the gross and uncomfortable blindness of pagan superstition, or permitted to become converts to a system of bigotry and fanaticism, which, without enlightening the mind, often debases the heart.' *Park's Travels, American edition*, p. 227.



desist from several remarks intended for this part of the subject. We trust, that from what has been said, our readers will be enabled to arrive at a just understanding of the history and objects of the Colonization Society, the practicability of these objects, and the methods by which they may be attained. Much more might be added to illustrate this last topic, both in regard to the local circumstances of the colony at Mesurado, and to the means employed at home to supply it with emigrants; but the view we have taken is enough, we think, to justify us in the belief, that the plan in its outlines is well conceived, and wants only the vigorous cooperation of the public to make it entirely successful.

We should be glad, also, if we had room, to press a few of the reasons, why the particular attention of our national legislature is demanded to this colony, and to urge the importance of its being taken wholly under the charge and jurisdiction of the government. In regard to what is called the constitutional question, whether the United States have power to establish such a colony, we know not in what it differs from the question, whether they have power to put their own laws in execution, or take the only efficient measures to suppress an evil, whose contagion is daily spreading, and which threatens a more serious calamity than any other to our national prosperity, if not to our political being. It would be strange, indeed, if it should be made plain to our legislators, that the constitution stops their ears to the cries of humanity, ties their hands from the work of benevolence, and compels them to nurture the seeds and foster the growth of our own destruction. And it comes to this, if they have not power to establish a colony abroad to receive the free blacks; for we hold it to be a position, as firmly grounded as any law in nature or society, that our black population can never be drawn off, except through the medium of such an establishment. Let us denominate our colony a Territory, if we will, and then it will not differ from our other Territories, except in being separated from the confederated States by an ocean, instead of a river, or lake. A voyage from Washington to Mesurado can be performed as quick as to the Falls of St Anthony, or the Saut of St Mary, and much quicker than to the Mandan Villages.

The expediency of such a territory is to be settled, perhaps, on other principles, but it would hardly seem possible for a division to exist on this point. The advantages to this country of a colony in Africa, under the patronage of the government, are not to be calculated; and it needs not be reckoned among its least recommendations, that it would hold out the prospect of removing, in a good degree, the causes of the present differences between the governments of the United States and Great Britain, concerning mixed commission courts, and the mutual privilege of search on the coast of Africa. It may be added, moreover, that should the colony be taken into the hands of the government, it will enable Virginia to pursue her long meditated plan of providing for the colonization of her free blacks. It is but reasonable to suppose, also, that other states would follow the example, especially those, which have already, by a vote of their legislatures, approved the scheme of the Colonization Society. They might act with a confidence and security, which they cannot feel in a private body, however strong in its numbers, or fortunate in its operations.

But we do not mean to encourage the Society in any relaxation of duty, by thus proposing to take away its most oppressive burden. We would excuse it from the troublesome, if not impracticable task of controlling and governing the colony, but we would have all its energy, its zeal, and its resources employed in carrying forward the grand object. This can be done in a more efficient manner, by acting in concert with the government; every weight thrown into the scale will then be felt in its full force.

The Society may watch over the execution of the laws, keep an eye on abuses, and communicate to the government valuable intelligence, which it would not derive from any other source. In the year 1807, shortly after the abolition act was passed in England, the African Institution was formed, with the avowed object of affording all possible aids to the full operation of that act. To this end it has been of essential service, by taking cognizance of events, disseminating a knowledge of African affairs, and occasionally presenting memorials to Parliament, or addresses to the King, calling their attention to particular subjects, which the inquiries and experience of the Institution proved to them demanded

additional legislation, or more vigorous executive measures. The Annual Reports of the Institution have sent out a fund of information, which has equally enlightened the public mind, and given a tone to public sentiment. The attention of the Colonization Society may be profitably turned into similar channels.

Another object, which may prove beneficial to the plan of colonization, is that of promoting travels and discoveries in the interior of Africa. Thirty six years ago the African Association was organized in London for this purpose, and almost all the knowledge of interior Africa, which has since come to light, has been derived through the agency of this Association. Our enterprising countryman, John Ledyard, was the first person employed in its service. He embarked in the undertaking with an enthusiasm and perseverance peculiar to himself alone, and which had previously carried him through many perils and sufferings to every quarter of the globe ; but he found an untimely grave in Egypt, when he was on the point of starting in a caravan for Nubia. The interesting and valuable discoveries of Hornemann and Park were made under the authority of the same Association. Let our Society send persons to explore the Mesurado river, or to engage in any other expeditions of discovery, from which the colony can be benefited, or the cause of African civilization advanced.

Schools ought also to be established, both in this country and in Africa, for the instruction of free persons of color, recaptured negroes, and natives. It is desirable, that there should be at least one institution in the United States, designed exclusively for an African education, where youths may be taught with the express view of going to Africa, and where young natives, whom their parents may suffer to come away, shall be looked after and educated. The auxiliary societies, scattered over the country, will be enabled to select the best subjects for such a school from among the families of those, who may be inclined to emigrate, and each auxiliary society may engage to support such persons as it shall send.

To the common elementary branches of knowledge, might be added the history and geography of Africa, the laws and customs of the people, accounts of the climate, soil, and

trade, and whatever else should qualify the pupil for entering on his new sphere to the best advantage to himself and the community, in the capacity in which he shall be destined to act. Schools of the same kind may be set up in the colony, with a course of instruction adapted to circumstances. The humbler and more useful arts of life may be taught to the natives, who may be induced to attend the schools. The most promising of the colonists may learn some of the languages of the interior, which shall fit them for greater influence and usefulness. Religious instruction may be inculcated, churches built, and preachers supported. In short, the Colonization Society will never want employment for its means and strength, nor meet with any obstructions to the fullest exercise of its benevolence and activity, although it shall relinquish the arduous and embarrassing task of holding supreme direction over the colony.

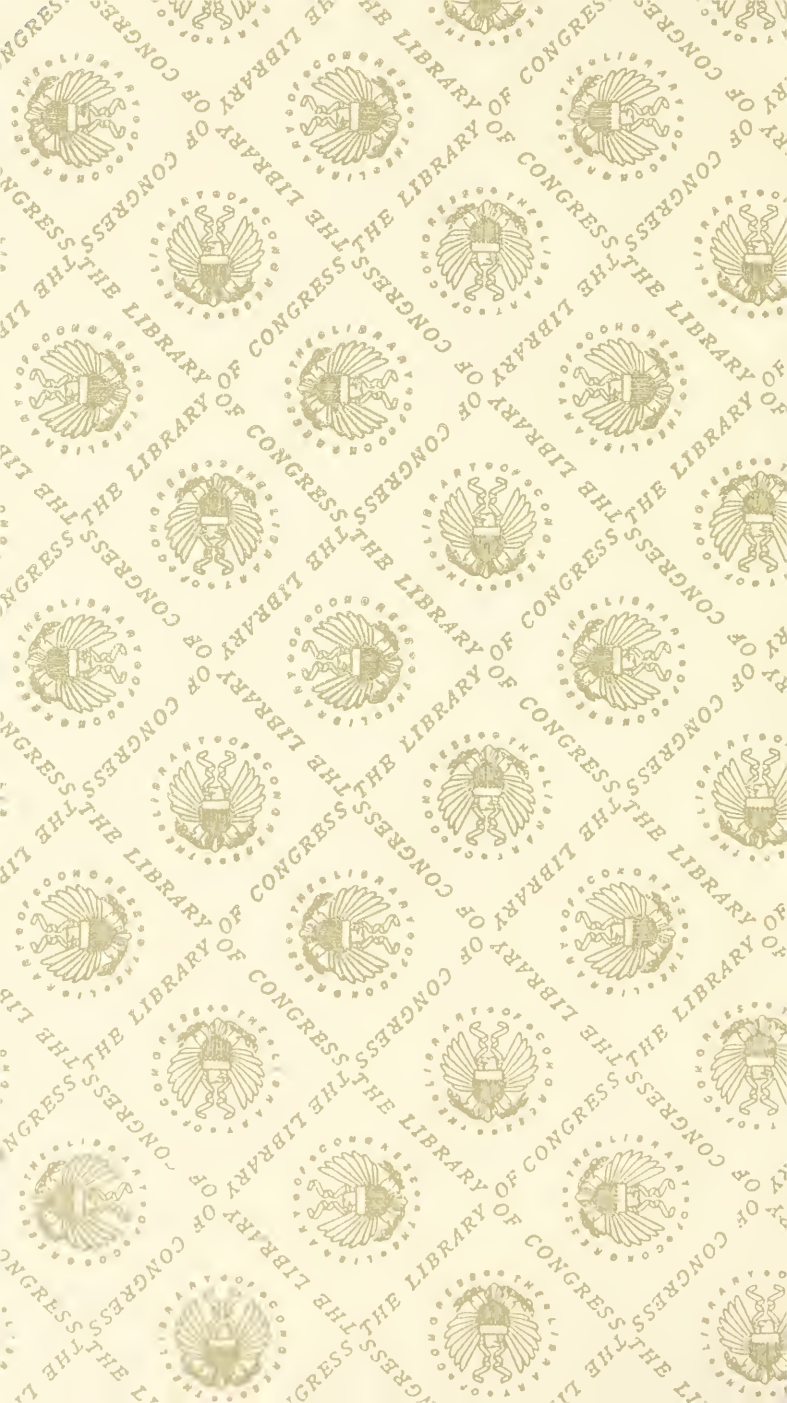
While writing the above, we have been gratified to see accounts of new auxiliary societies springing up in different parts of the country, and especially one at Richmond, Virginia, with the venerable Chief Justice Marshall at its head. The sanction of such a name may well confirm the confidence of the steady advocates for colonization, and communicate a quickening power to the tardy zeal of the wavering. When, in addition to this, we reflect on the unqualified approbation with which the present Chief Magistrate of the nation has uniformly regarded the designs of the Colonization Society, the number of distinguished persons found among its active patrons, and the progress it has made under an accumulation of discouraging circumstances, we can hardly desire a stronger testimony to the importance of its objects, or a more auspicious presage of its ultimate success.





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